



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 3, 2014

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR EMANUEL NAMES KEN BENNETT DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF AND DIRECTOR OF THE  
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

*Senior Obama Official Will Serve as a Direct Link Between City Departments and Chicago Communities*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today named Ken Bennett as Deputy Chief of Staff and the Director of the Mayor's Office of Public Engagement. In this role, he will serve as a direct link between city government – including the Mayor's Office, city departments, and sister agencies – with external partners and communities across Chicago. The mission of the office is to engage neighborhoods and community leaders with city government, ensuring the resources of government are closely connected to the residents it serves.

"Our diverse neighborhoods and residents are the foundation of this great City," said Mayor Emanuel. "As Deputy Chief of Staff and the Director of the Office of Public Engagement, Ken will help ensure that the City continues to be engaged with all communities across Chicago and his background and experience makes him well-suited to serve in this role for my administration"

Bennett previously served as a Presidential Appointee and Regional Representative for the U.S. Secretary of Labor in the Midwest Region. He also served in the White House as Deputy Assistant to President Barack Obama and Deputy Director of Presidential Personnel. Prior to that, Bennett was Illinois State Director for then-U.S. Senator Barack Obama and State Director for the 2008 Obama for America Presidential Campaign.

Ken has deep roots in the City of Chicago. He began his career learning first-hand the complexities of local government as an aide in the office of former Chicago Mayor Harold Washington.

Bennett has held major positions in city and statewide campaigns in Illinois, including Director of Field Operations for an Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan campaign and Chicago Regional Director for the Democratic Party of Illinois. As a former board member of L.E.A.P. for Excellence Foundation, Ken is a champion of the idea of community and fostering youth through civil activities.

"I am honored to serve as the Director of the Office of Public Engagement and look forward to working with members of our diverse communities and assisting residents throughout the city," said Bennett. "I am eager to begin cultivating opportunities to enhance the working relationships between our community, non-profit and religious partners."

Mayor Emanuel created the Mayor's Office of Public Engagement in June of 2013 to connect City departments directly with the Chicago neighborhoods they serve. The Office of Public Engagement works closely with the Office of New Americans; Commission on Human Relations; Faith Outreach; Civic Engagement and Service; Chicago Alternative Policing Strategies (CAPS); and external and community affairs representatives from City departments and sister agencies.

The Office connects community members to resources across City governments to help them serve and celebrate their communities while collaborating with neighborhood and civic organizations; nonprofits, policy advisory groups; and various City agencies to inform and engage citizens for the betterment of their communities and the city at large. Felicia Davis previously served as the office's first director and was recently named the Commissioner of the Department of Buildings.

Ken currently resides in the Chatham neighborhood with Lisa, his wife of 23 years, and their two sons.

###